

REMARKS

The Examiner's communication dated December 29, 2006 has been received and carefully considered. In conformance with the applicable statutory requirements, this paper constitutes a complete reply and/or a bona fide attempt to advance the application to allowance. Specifically, claims 1, 2, 7 and 15 have been amended and claims 18 and 19 have been cancelled. Reexamination and/or reconsideration of the application as amended are respectfully requested.

Summary of the Office Action

Claim 18, which has been cancelled, was objected to for minor informalities.

Claims 1-17 and 20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph.

Claims 1-17 and 20 stand rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1 and 16 of U.S. Patent No. 6,966,429 and over claims 1 and 26 of U.S. Patent No. 6,896,121.

35 U.S.C. § 112

The claims have been carefully amended to overcome the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph.

Double Patenting

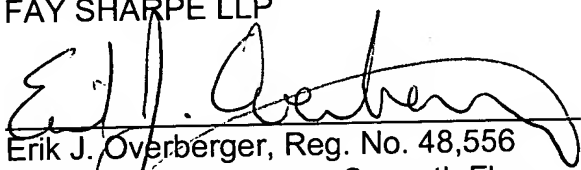
Applicant herewith attaches a pair of Terminal Disclaimers concerning U.S. Patent Nos. 6,966,429 and 6,896,121. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that the double patenting rejections be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

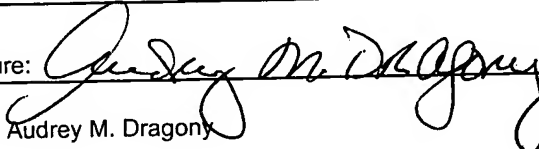
All formal and informal matters having been addressed, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. It is believed that the claim changes clearly place the application in condition for allowance, defining over any fair teaching attributable to the references of record. Alternatively, if the Examiner is of the view that the application is not in clear condition for allowance, it is requested that the Examiner telephone the undersigned for purposes of conducting a telephone interview to resolve any outstanding differences. Accordingly, an early notice of allowance is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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March 14, 2007
Date

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